

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16), who serves on the House Armed Services and Intelligence Committees, today issued the following statement in response to President Obama's address to the nation regarding Libya:

"I appreciate President Obama speaking to the American people about our mission in Libya. Unfortunately, the President left many questions unanswered, and he continues to send mixed messages about our ultimate goals in Libya.

"The President has limited authority to use military force without authorization from Congress when there is an imminent national security threat, but he made clear that he acted for humanitarian, not national security, reasons. That is a clear violation of the War Powers Act.

"The President still owes the American people an explanation for his decision to transfer authority from them, through their representatives in Congress, to an international body. President Obama must have Congressional authorization for this mission to continue.

"The President stood by the U.N. Security Council resolution calling for the protection of civilians from Moammar Gaddafi's wrath, but also stated that Gaddafi must be removed from power. Meanwhile, military leaders say Gaddafi could remain in power when our mission is complete. Either way, what happens next? What is the plan to replace Gaddafi if he falls, and how do we deal with him if he does not?

"Since we are working with multiple nations through NATO, who is ultimately in charge and who will command our troops? How long will this mission last, and at what cost? If military action will last longer than 60 days, even under NATO command, will the President seek Congressional authorization, as required by the War Powers Act?"

Rooney served in the U.S. Army JAG Corps, and taught Constitutional Law at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

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